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ML sponsors Bring Your Child to Work Day

by Katherine Gleason, AFRL Public Affairs

WRIGHT-PATTERSON AIR FORCE BASE, Ohio — For the children whose families work in the Air Force Research Laboratory's Materials and Manufacturing Directorate, April 25th was a morning filled with information, demonstrations, and surprises.

ML hosted its "Bring your Child to Work Day" in an effort to educate, and entertain, the next generation of Air Force scientists and engineers. The four-hour event provided an overview of the directorate, as well as science demonstrations and a tour of the facility.

The morning began with a brief talk by ML Deputy Director Col. Tim Brotherton. He opened by asking the children what schools they attended. The attendees represented all parts of the Miami Valley, and ranged in age from preschool to high school.

Then, things got a little more interesting.

"To make you feel at home since you're not in school today," said Brotherton, "I have a little quiz for you."

This was met with audible groans, but the "quiz" turned out to be something even the younger children could handle. The three questions were: Who's the best golfer in the world? Who's the best basketball player in the world? What is the best Materials and Manufacturing Lab in the world?

The children all knew that Tiger Woods and Michael Jordan are the best golfer and basketball player, but what many of them were surprised to hear is that AFRL's ML lab is also best in the world.

"I'm not boasting when I say that because of your moms and dad, aunts and uncles, we have the world's best materials and manufacturing laboratory, bar none," said Brotherton.

Brotherton then continued his presentation with a brief description of the work that goes on within the directorate. He summarized each technology area, and encouraged the children to ask questions throughout the day.

When Brotherton finished speaking, Jim Solomon took center stage. He asked the children what they thought a scientist looked like. They all agreed that Brotherton, dressed in his BDUs, did not look like a scientist. So, they dressed him up like one—with



WOW — Jim Solomon, ML Senior Research Engineer, University of Dayton Research Institute contractor, (pictured) performed a "Wizards of Wright" physics demonstration on "Take Your Child to Work Day". (Air Force photo by Katherine Gleason)

a long white lab coat, coke-bottle glasses, rubber gloves, and a beanie.

After a few good laughs, Solomon began his "Wizards of Wright" physics demonstration. He showed the audience a series of basic science principles in an easy-to-understand and entertaining manner.

Following the experiments, the children were divided into groups by age, and given a tour of the ML facility. Stops on the tour included the Scanning Electron Microscope, the parts facility, electricity and magnetism, and a series of tabletop displays. @